

(THE MOUNTAIN HOTEL)

T H E H O T E L

Václav Havel

Characters:

Dr Josef KUBÍK, a writer

Count Serghei Ilych ORLOV

Josef TETZ

Josef DLASK

RACHEL

Vilém PECHAR

PECHAROVA'

LIZA

Josef DRAŠAR, the director of the Hotel

Josef KRAUS, the deputy director of the Hotel

KOTRBA

KUNC

The play takes place in the garden of the Hotel.
The time is the present.

(trs. Jitka Martin)

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F I R S T A C T

(The garden of the Hotel. At the back a few steps leading onto a terrace which is connected to the entrance of the Hotel and the Hotel lounge. On the terrace are two small tables and some chairs; in the garden on the left a garden-table with a few chairs and a large parasol, on the right a bench. KUBIK is sitting at the table on the left on the terrace reading a newspaper, at the table on the right sits KOTRBA who follows the action with lively interest, nevertheless, doesn't utter a single word throughout the play. RACHEL is sitting at the table in the garden knitting, a thread of wool is trailing out of her handbag which lies in front of her on the table. ORLOV is sitting on the bench on the right. PECHAR is sitting on the rug in the middle of the stage wearing nothing but shorts and a straw hat. He is surrounded by number of things: a thermos-flask, pocket mirror, comb etc.. He is absorbed in covering his body with sun-tan lotion while singing the song from the film Doctor Zhivago)

PECHAR (singing) Somewhere my love
 there will be songs to sing,
 although the snow
 covers the hopes of spring.
 Somewhere a hill
 blossoms in green and gold,
 and there are dreams
 all that your heart can hold.

(PECHAR's singing fades into a soft humming which blends with the ensuing dialogue. After a moment of stillness a ball bounces onto the stage from the left followed by TETZ. He picks up the ball, looks around all present until he sees ORLOV)

TETZ Where have you been all afternoon?

ORLOV I had a little nap -

TETZ In the afternoon? Now that's silly! What are you going to do tonight? You won't be able to go to sleep again -

ORLOV I'll take a sleeping pill -

TETZ You mustn't even think of that! Do you want to ruin your kidneys?

(TETZ sits down on the bench beside ORLOV holding the ball in his lap. PECHAR stops humming his tune.
- Pause -)

TETZ How did it go this morning?

(ORLOV only waves his arm)

Nothing again?

(ORLOV shakes his head)

TETZ
(cont) That's because you won't touch prunes -
(-Pause-
Then PECHAR, still putting on his lotion, speaks to KUBÍK
without looking at him)

PECHAR Listen doctor -

KUBÍK (looks up from his paper) Yes?

PECHAR You may think it's none of our business -

KUBÍK What?

PECHAR But, in fact, it sort of concerns all of us -

PECHAROVA (calling off stage) Vilém!

KUBÍK I don't know what you have in mind -

PECHAR Look here, after all it's the director's birthday, isn't it?
We're throwing the party to jolly him along a bit,
aren't we? After all we all need him, don't we now?

PECHAROVA (calling off stage) Vilém!

KUBÍK You mean to say, it would be wiser if I didn't go there -
(LIZA enters from the right carrying flowers in her arms.
As soon as ORLOV sees her, he gets up)

ORLOV Liza -

LIZA (stops) Yes?
(ORLOV steps near her)

ORLOV (in a low voice) I cannot believe that you've forgotten
it all!

LIZA But I've told you already, it must be a mistake. I've
never been to Paris - (she wants to move on)
Would you excuse me?

ORLOV (blocks her way) What about our first encounter in the
second-hand bookshop de Vrubecky on the Boulevard
Saint Germain? And our reading Les Chants de Maldoror
and Nadia? You don't remember?

LIZA I'm sorry Count -
(LIZA bypasses ORLOV and exits on the left. ORLOV hastens
after her)

ORLOV (off stage) Liza! Liza!

PECHAROVA (off stage) Vilém!

(PECHAR has stopped rubbing in his sun-tan lotion and is pouring the contents of his thermos-flask onto the grass)

PECHAR

Anyway, if it's all the same to you if you go there or not, what's the point of provoking him? You should see that for yourself without complicating the whole situation -

(PECHAROVA enters from the left, she carries a knitted vest)

PECHAROVA

(to PECHAR). Here you are! Why don't you answer when I call you?

PECHAR

What's happened?

PECHAROVA

I brought you the vest -

PECHAR

What for?

PECHAROVA

I am not leaving you outside like that -

PECHAR

But it's warm -

PECHAROVA

Don't be fooled by the sun, Vilém. Don't forget it's September already, it seems warm but you'll catch a chill from sitting on the ground. You remember what happened last year - there you were showing off just like now, and how you paid for it! Now, here you are -

(PECHAROVA kneels to help PECHAR to put on his vest)

(in a low voice) How did it go? - And the boarding-house?

PECHAR

Hmmm -

PECHAROVA

What did she say?

PECHAR

Nothing -

PECHAROVA

That's a good sign!

(When PECHAROVA has finished helping PECHAR to put his vest on, she peers into his thermos-flask. In the meantime ORLOV returns to the right and sits down gloomily on the bench again beside TETZ)

PECHAROVA

I'll bring you some more tea -

PECHAR

I don't want any -

PECHAROVA

But it's empty!

(PECHAROVA dashes off to the Hotel with the thermos-flask.
- Pause -)

ORLOV

I think I'll be leaving soon -

RACHEL

(looks from her knitting) Don't you like it here with us?

ORLOV

I don't stay anywhere long, it's my nature -

RACHEE

It will be sad without you -

(PECHAR takes off his vest, folds it neatly, puts it near him and starts rubbing in some more lotion.

- Pause -

The sound of the train whistle in the distance - all present glance at their watches simultaneously. Shortly after DLASK comes out of the Hotel carrying in one hand a bottle of wine and in the other two glasses. He looks around and when he sees KUBÍK comes to his table)

DLASK

Can I?

KUBÍK

(looks up surprised) Yes, of course, please -

(KUBÍK offers DLASK the empty chair and goes back to reading his paper. DLASK sits down and pours wine into both glasses)

DLASK

It's for you -

KUBÍK

Sorry?

DLASK

I said, it's for you -

KUBÍK

(puzzled) For me? Well, but -

(DLASK moves the glass towards KUBÍK with a smile. KUBÍK lays aside his paper and lifts his glass. DLASK clinks his glass against KUBÍK's)

DLASK

To you know what!

KUBÍK

To what?

DLASK

Oh well, everything generally!

KUBÍK

Thank you -

(They both drink.

- Pause -

Then DLASK produces a pack of cards from his pocket, shuffles them skilfully and with a professional crackle invites KUBÍK to join him in the game)

KUBÍK

Sorry, I don't play -

DLASK

Really?

KUBÍK

Really, I'm sorry -

DLASK

Shame -

(DLASK disappointed puts the cards back in his pocket.

- Pause -)

DLASK

Are you feeling better today?

KUBÍK

Feeling better? Why?

DLASK I heard you weren't feeling too good -

KUBÍK When?

DLASK Yesterday, at the director's birthday-party. I wanted to know why you didn't come and they told me you weren't feeling too good -

KUBÍK I see -

DLASK You could have at least shown up -

KUBÍK I thought perhaps it was better not to -

DLASK This is it, in your place I would have come!

(-Pause-)

Did you write last night?

KUBÍK No -

DLASK You had the light on -

KUBÍK I couldn't sleep, I read a little -

DLASK Why didn't you write then if you couldn't sleep?

KUBÍK I don't know - didn't feel like it -

DLASK No ideas?

KUBÍK Probably not -

DLASK This is it, why should you have ideas all the time? To write, it's not laying bloody bricks, is it! One needs inspiration, doesn't one?

KUBÍK Hmm -

DLASK Sometimes it goes all right, sometimes it doesn't - it doesn't come to you like that! I'm just an ordinary man obviously, nothing in your line, but I know what it's like. After all I had a go at it myself -

KUBÍK At writing?

DLASK Well, they were just silly things -

KUBÍK Maybe not -

DLASK Oh yeh, they were -

(MILENA dressed as a waitress comes out of the Hotel carrying a tray of fruit juices. She offers one to KOTRBA)

MILENA Fruit-juice -

(KOTRBA takes one glass with a nod of thanks. MILENA goes over to DLASK and KUBÍK)

MILENA Here you are gentlemen -

(DLASK only shakes his head. MILENA goes down the steps to the garden and offers a glass to RACHEL)

RACHEL Thank you Milena -

(MILENA goes to TETZ and ORLOV; TETZ takes two glasses off the tray)

TETZ (to ORLOV) Here you are -

ORLOV I'm not thirsty -

TETZ You need vitamins -

(ORLOV accepts the glass. MILENA then offers a glass to PECHAR who is still covering himself with the lotion, ostentatiously ignoring her.
-Pause -)

MILENA A drink for you?

(-Pause- PECHAR doesn't react)

Aren't you speaking to me?

PECHAR Go away -

MILENA What's the matter?

PECHAR I said, go away!

MILENA Are you angry with me?

PECHAR Did you hear what I said?

(-pause-)

MILENA I suppose one isn't allowed to say a word to another guest.

PECHAR You were alone with him for over an hour in the greenhouse, and don't I know what he was telling you! You behave like a tart!

MILENA Vilém!

PECHAR He'll take you away from here! Tssss! He'll get you a place at a hotel school! Tsss! He'll get divorced and start a boarding-house with you! Bloody lies! Him of all people! Everyone knows that he wouldn't even fart without his dear little wife! I bet he had to ask her first if he can have it off with you. In fact, who knows if she isn't working out what he should be telling you to get his own without getting too involved!

MILENA I know all this Vilém. Everything he says goes in one ear and out the other -

PECHAR If you didn't take it seriously, you wouldn't be listening to him for a whole hour in the greenhouse! I'm telling you: catch you at it again and it's the end!

MILENA Well, let me tell you one thing: whatever he's like, he has certainly more dignity than you. He loves me, even though he knows about us, and he wouldn't say one nasty word against you -

PECHAR I should think he wouldn't! I come in handy for him! He knows that when he's done with you it will be easier to get rid of you if I'm still around. But I'm not any old dustbin! And I'm telling you for the last time: it's either him or me, is that clear?

MILENA (sharply) All right then!

(MILENA goes energetically towards the Hotel carrying her tray. PECHAR, slightly embarrassed shakes his head in puzzlement, looks around the others with a half-witted smile. Nobody pays attention except for KOTRBA who also shakes his head and smiles idiotically.
- Pause -)

TETZ (to ORLOV) How was your walk?

ORLOV I didn't go for a walk -

TETZ What? You didn't go for a walk?

ORLOV No -

TETZ Such a day, not a cloud in the sky, fresh air, and you sitting at home! I can't understand you. I was up by the lock first thing in the morning looking for mushrooms, then I gave a hand to the gardener, then I was sunbathing for an hour on the roof, and since lunch I've been playing football with the cook practically until now! You're not doing yourself any good avoiding exercise. And then you're surprised you're always feeling off colour. What did you do the whole morning?

ORLOV This morning?

TETZ Yes -

ORLOV I read a little -

TETZ Copies of your old letters, eh?

ORLOV Hmmm -

(- Pause -
RACHEL stops knitting and looks at ORLOV)

RACHEL Have you ever been to Náměšť, Serghei Ilych?

ORLOV Where did you say?

RACHEL In Náměšť, in Moravia -

ORLOV No, I'm sorry, I haven't -

RACHEL I was born there -

ORLOV Really, in Namešt?

RACHEL Yes -

ORLOV I didn't know that -

RACHEL My father was the head forester on the estate of Count Haukwitz. I spent practically all my childhood there - in some kind of symbiosis with forests, wild animals, lakes - I was such a skinny little thing, youngest of eight children; you can imagine, always out with my brothers and sisters - I think I owe my independence to those days-

ORLOV Early childhood has a great influence on the formation of a character -

RACHEL Oh, you put it so well, Serghei Ilych! Yes, early childhood has a great influence on the formation of a character. All the same, I sometime wonder what good has all this independence brought me if I never was truly happy -

ORLOV What makes you think you were never happy?

RACHEL Oh, I've always had success with men but never with those I really cared for -

(RACHEL day-dreams for a moment, then sighs and starts knitting again.
- Pause -)

DLASK (to KUBIK) You don't mind me sitting here?

KUBIK No -

DLASK Maybe you wanted to be on your own -

KUBIK No, I didn't -

DLASK I wasn't sure at first, I told myself: he doesn't really want to talk to you, he's got enough on his plate as it is. But then I told myself: after all he's just another guest here, same as you, so why shouldn't you say hello.

KUBIK Well, that's kind of you -

(- Pause -)

Then RACHEL stops knitting and looks fixedly at TETZ. TETZ catches her eye, returns her glare and mechanically passes his ball to ORLOV. RACHEL lays down her knitting and she and TETZ slowly get up. Looking at each other, they slowly walk to the Hotel.
- Pause -)

DLASK I don't really go for tactics, you know. When I see someone I like and the moment is right for a little chat, I take the plunge without hanging about -

KUBIK It's the right thing to do, I'm sure, on the other hand -
DLASK Why on the other hand? What other hand?
KUBIK Well, I only meant that, perhaps, you should think about yourself first -

DLASK Look doctor, I'm not a hero, I'm just an ordinary man like any other, but I'm not a swine either, that I am not! And I can always justify what I'm doing! Always!

(- Pause -

Then ORLOV addresses PECHAR who is again rubbing in his lotion)

ORLOV Can I ask you something?

PECHAR Sure -

ORLOV Aren't you sometimes afraid?

PECHAR Me? Afraid of what?

ORLOV Just generally -

PECHAR Go on, what an idea!

(PECHAR stops rubbing in his lotion, screws the lid on the bottle and puts it away. He takes off his hat and starts combing his hair while singing his song softly)

PECHAR (sings) Somewhere a hill
 blossoms in green and gold -

(The curtain closes)

S E C O N D A C T

(When the curtain opens KUBIK and TETZ sit on the terrace at the table on the left. On their table lie TETZ's ball and KUBIK's paper. KOTRBA sits at the table on the right. RACHEL sits at the table in the garden and knits. ORLOV and DLASK sit on the bench on the right. They both hold glasses with wine. The bottle is at their feet. PECHAR sits on the rug in the middle of the stage as in the first act. He is examining himself in the pocket-mirror, grimacing at himself from time to time.

- A prolonged pause -)

ORLOV Do you hear?

PECHAR What?

ORLOV Summer -

PECHAR (listens for a moment) Bees, aren't they?

ORLOV Bees, birds, woods, rivers, people - just like there -

PECHAR Where?

(ORLOV stares dreamily in front of him, a tear running down his cheek.

- Pause -)

TETZ (to KUBIK) I hope you got some sun -

KUBIK You know I can't stand the sun -

TETZ Not even for a bit, on the roof?

KUBIK No -

TETZ Well, you can't be surprised you look the way you look!

KUBIK How do I look?

TETZ Like a corpse!

KUBIK I think you're exaggerating -

TETZ O.K. then, we'll go to the lounge and stand together in front of a mirror, you'll see for yourself. (Takes KUBIK's paper)
Today's?

KUBIK Hardly -

(TETZ puts the paper back on the table. DLASK produces a pack of cards from his pocket, shuffles them professionally and invites ORLOV to join in the game)

ORLOV Sorry, I don't play -

DLASK Really?

ORLOV Really, I'm sorry -

DLASK Shame -

(DLASK disappointed puts the cards back in his pocket)

TETZ (to KUBIK) And otherwise?

KUBIK Otherwise?

TETZ How do you feel mentally? I don't suppose it's too good either -

KUBIK Not bad -

TETZ Now you'll tell me you feel on top of the world!

KUBIK No, I can't say that, but I feel certainly better than the day before yesterday -

TETZ Well if you want to go by how you felt day before yesterday -

(LIZA appears on the left carrying flowers in her arms. As soon as ORLOV sees her he gets up)

ORLOV Liza!

LIZA (stops) Yes?

ORLOV (in a low voice) I beg you, stop this comedy!

LIZA I'm sorry Count, I don't know what you're referring to - (she wants to move on) Would you excuse me?

ORLOV (blocks her way) What about our night walks through the Quartier Latin when I was telling you about my correspondence with Leo Trotsky? What about your Sunday visits to my student garret in the Rue Jacob? Even that means nothing to you?

LIZA Nothing -

(LIZA bypasses ORLOV and exits right. ORLOV hastens after her)

ORLOV (off stage) Liza! Liza!

(- Pause -

Then PECHAR who is still making faces at himself in the mirror speaks to KUBIK, naturally without looking at him)

PECHAR If you think doctor you've improved the situation in some way, you're dead wrong -

KUBIK You mean the last night's party? It went very well, no one showed me in any way that my presence -

PECHAR Come off it doctor! You know better than I do that no one could say a word because you simply set us up, made it look a matter of fact, held us on the razor's edge. We couldn't do anything but keep quiet. And that's exactly what you were counting on !

KUBIK That's not true -

PECHAR What do you mean it's not true? You've taken advantage of our sense of decency, and you knew what consequences this could have for us. A moral blackmail, that's what it was!

KUBIK Now that's perhaps -

(PECHAROVA' has come out of the Hotel with a thermos-flask. She pours tea into its lid)

PECHAR A cripple can't expect the healthy to cripple themselves for him out of pity. You've got no scruples!

(PECHAROVA' hands over the lid to PECHAR. He drinks and throws the lid on the grass. PECHAROVA' picks up the vest and starts putting it on PECHAR. ORLOV returns from the left and sits down gloomily on the bench beside DLASK)

PECHAROVA' (in a low voice) Vilém -

PECHAR What is it?

PECHAROVA' That scene - it wasn't necessary -

PECHAR What scene?

PECHAROVA' She feels nothing for him. She doesn't take it seriously, all that talk in the greenhouse. You're not fair to her -

PECHAR Why does she listen to him then?

PECHAROVA' To be polite. Believe me Vilém, you're making it more difficult for yourself. You should tell her you're sorry -

PECHAR Tsss -

PECHAROVA' At least show her you're not angry with her.

(PECHAROVA' finished dressing PECHAR in his vest, screws the lid onto the thermos-flask which she puts on the rug and hurries off to the Hotel.
-Pause-)

ORLOV I think I'll be leaving soon -

RACHEL Do you really have to Serghei Ilych?

ORLOV A change is as good as a rest. I'm a bird of passage -

(PECHAR takes off his vest, folds it neatly and starts again with his grimaces into the mirror.
- Pause -)

DLASK (to ORLOV) Feel homesick, don't you?

(ORLOV nods his head slightly)

I don't go for memories myself. I prefer to look forward rather than backward, you know. I'm not interested in the past. In fact I can't remember a thing. I mean from my youth and all that. I was never sort of interested in that. I couldn't really tell you a lot about myself. I'm really more interested in what's now -

ORLOV You are a lucky man -

(- pause -)

DLASK I'm not boring you?

ORLOV No -

DLASK I like meeting new people, you know. Some people don't go for it much. You'd be surprised how many people actually hate it. That's why I always ask first -

(- pause -)

Do you like meeting new people?

ORLOV On the whole yes -

DLASK This is it, we must be similar types. We could get on really well. I'm just an ordinary man, you know, as far as education goes, can't compare with you, obviously, but, on the other hand, I go for a good joke. Do you like jokes?

ORLOV It depends -

DLASK I have a sort of instinct, you know. For people. I think I know what they're about. I mean, I'm interested in everybody, no matter who. That's why I like meeting new people like I said -

(MILENA comes out of the Hotel carrying a tray of fruit-juices, First she offers one to KOTRBA)

MILENA Fruit-juice -

(KOTRBA takes one glass with a nod of thanks. MILENA moves to TETZ and KUBIK; TETZ takes two glasses off the tray)

TETZ (to KUBIK) Here you are -

KUBIK I'm not thirsty -

TETZ You need vitamins -

(KUBIK accepts his glass. MILENA goes down the steps and offers a glass to RACHEL)

RACHEL Thank you Milem -

(MILENA goes over to DLASK and ORLOV)

MILENA Here you are gentlemen -

(DLASK only shakes his head. MILENA then turns to PECHAR. He is examining himself in the mirror and ignores her. MILENA hesitates and then turns back to the Hotel)

PECHAR And what about me?

MILENA (stops short) I'm sorry, I thought you -

(MILENA returns to PECHAR and offers him the tray. PECHAR suddenly pulls MILENA down on the rug laughing. The tray flies off scattering the glasses on the grass)

MILENA Are you mad? Look what you've done!

(PECHAR embraces her)

PECHAR Well? Shall we go away together?

MILENA And what about your wife?

PECHAR That's my problem, isn't it?

MILENA I have to think about it, it's all happened so suddenly, I've got some commitments here -

PECHAR I heard he had a fit of jealousy -

MILENA Hmmm -

PECHAR What did he say?

MILENA He knew everything -

PECHAR Everything?

MILENA What you told me in the greenhouse, about the hotel school, and the boarding-house -

PECHAR How did he find out?

MILENA I don't know. He said terrible things about you. He said you lie just to get your own, he said you'd never leave your wife and anyway, that she gave you permission to have an affair with me -

PECHAR What did you tell him?

MILENA That you'd never say a nasty word against him -

PECHAR Do you think it was sensible, provoke him like that?

MILENA Do you know what he said to that? He said you don't mind him having an affair with me because it'll be easier for you to get rid of me once it's finished between us -

PECHAR Fascinating, the absurd conclusions born in a mind sick with jealousy. Anyway, what are you going to do now?

MILENA I think it's all over -

PECHAR For good?

MILENA I'm sick of all those scenes -

PECHAR I know, but we should try and see it his way too. He's jealous because he's in love with you -

MILENA And you don't mind that?

PECHAR I do, I do. At the same time I feel sorry for him, I know what love can do to you. He's basically an unhappy man, and for this reason alone, if you really want to leave him, you should try and do it with care - slowly - gently - if possible amicably -

MILENA You seem to have more understanding for him than me -

PECHAR But it's in your interest as well!

(MILENA draws away from PECHAR, stares absorbed in thought for a moment and then starts softly)

MILENA Vilém -

PECHAR Yes?

MILENA Are you at all jealous?

PECHAR Of course I am! I just try to control myself a little bit more -

MILENA You're managing it ever so well -

PECHAR It only seems like that -

(MILENA ponders over it, then she suddenly gets to her feet energetically. PECHAR tries to pull her back but she pushes him away)

PECHAR What's the matter with you? What's happened?

(MILENA upset, runs to the Hotel. PECHAR, slightly embarrassed, shakes his head and looks around the others with a half-witted smile. Nobody pays attention except for KOTRBA who also shakes his head and smiles idiotically. - Pause -

The sound of the train whistle in the distance, all present glance at their watches simultaneously)

TETZ (to KUBÍK) Why don't you write, say, your memoirs?

KUBÍK Memoirs? What for?

TETZ It would give you something to do -

(- Pause -

PECHAR is again grimacing int he mirror)

TETZ Or why not start a diary? Observations, ideas, impressions -

KUBIK Well, I just -

TETZ If only I had a bit of time I'd get on with my memoirs. Things are getting clearer every year -

(- Pause -)

Can I tell you something doctor?

KUBIK Please -

TETZ I have a funny feeling that you've simply resigned yourself -

KUBIK Resigned?

TETZ Yes, resigned, everything: your health, your diet, your writing, your appearance, and it seems your position in society as well. Why didn't you come to the fête on Sunday?

KUBIK In my situation?

TETZ Precisely in your situation you should have come! You've wasted an opportunity that's not likely to come up again soon -

KUBIK Opportunity for what?

TETZ For what! To get out of this isolation, to make contacts, explain misunderstandings. Believe me, in cases like this there's nothing better than being face to face!

KUBIK I know that -

TETZ There you are! I hope that you'll at least turn up at the director's birthday-party tomorrow.

(KUNC enters from the right. Nobody pays any attention to him except for KOTRBA who breaks out in an animated waving and smiles. KUNC goes straight to him and whispers at length in his ear. KOTRBA is obviously amused and often bursts out laughing. When KUNC finishes his story they both go on laughing, then they pat each other's backs amicably and KUNC hurries off to the right.

- Pause -

RACHEL stops knitting and looks at ORLOV)

RACHEL Serghei Ilych -

ORLOV Yes?

RACHEL You should go to Náměšť sometime -

ORLOV I'd like to -

RACHEL It's a charming place. My father used to be a teacher at the Grammar school there. He was a typical intellectual, a bibliophile and a chronicler. I was the only child, my parents had me rather late, so you can imagine how everything

RACHEL
(cont.) was centred on me. There was no question of my running round the village green like other children. I never knew what it was like. It may well be that in that unnatural isolation the beginnings of my shyness took root for which I've been paying so heavily all my life -

ORLOV Paying - how?

RACHEL I've never really overcome my shyness and been able to voice the things that really mattered. And that's why I've been passing by, as if by fate, all those with whom I'd want to share my journey through life -

(RACHEL day-dreams, then sighs and starts knitting again.
- Pause -)

DLASK (to ORLOV) We could get together more often, what do you say?

ORLOV Hmmm -

DLASK This is it, it takes a little while before people team up. It can't be rushed, it's as they say, a matter of progress. Don't you think?

ORLOV Quite -

DLASK But the two of us, we'd complement each other, what do you think?

ORLOV Maybe -

DLASK You're comparatively alone -

ORLOV Well -

DLASK This is it, I, when one takes it all in all, don't really have proper friends. I know people, I know quite a few of them, I like meeting new people, like I told you, but otherwise, when I take it all in all; we're about the same age, aren't we?

ORLOV About -

DLASK This is it!

(- Pause -
Then RACHEL stops knitting and looks fixedly at DLASK. DLASK returns her glare and mechanically passes his glass to ORLOV. RACHEL lays down her knitting and she and DLASK walk slowly to the Hotel looking at each other.
- Pause -)

TETZ (to KUBIK) No, no dear doctor, life is very short and what you don't fight for you won't get.

(TETZ picks up the ball from the table)

Shall we have a game?

KUBIK Sorry, I don't play -

TETZ Really?

KUBIK Really, I'm sorry -

TETZ Shame -

(TETZ puts the ball back on the table.
- Pause -)

ORLOV Do you hear?

PECHAR What?

ORLOV Summer -

PECHAR (listens for a moment) Bees, aren't they?

ORLOV Bees, birds, woods, rivers, people - just like there -

PECHAR Where?

ORLOV (softly) In Voronezh -

(ORLOV stares dreamily, a tear running down his cheek.
PECHAR makes a monkey-like grimace in his pocket-mirror.
The curtain closes)

T H I R D A C T

(When the curtain opens ORLOV and TETZ sit on the terrace at the table on the left; on their table lies TETZ's ball. KOTRBA sits at the table on the right. RACHEL sits at the table in the garden and knits. KUBIK and DLASK sit on the bench on the right. They both hold glasses with wine. The bottle is at their feet. PECHAR sits on the rug in the middle of the stage. He is shaving himself with an electric shaver at the end of a long cable which had been extended several times and leads into the Hotel. PECHAR is singing his song softly)

PECHAR (sings) Somewhere my love
 there will be songs to sing,
 although the snow
 covers the hopes of spring.
 Somewhere a hill -

(PECHAR's singing fades into a soft humming and blends with the ensuing dialogue)

DLASK (to KUBIK) You haven't had an easy life, have you?

KUBIK It depends how you look at it -

DLASK Oh no, you haven't, just admit it! Well I haven't either. Still, we've both managed to bear it with dignity considering how lousy it is, don't you think?

KUBIK I've always tried to -

DLASK This is it, tried, that's the word, tried! We've tried our best in the circumstances. One is bound to slip a little here and there, after all it's only human, but what counts is to see it sort of globally. And from that angle we've basically held our ground. In other words, we've nothing to be ashamed of, we can look each other in the eye, don't you think?

KUBIK Yes -

DLASK And since we've got as far as this, into the final straight, as they say, why the devil shouldn't we make it to the end! Especially if we try together! How about it?

KUBIK Hmmm -

(RACHEL stops knitting and looks at ORLOV)

RACHEL Do remember me when you visit the castle in Náměšť -

ORLOV You lived in the castle in Náměšť?

RACHEL When I was little we spent most of the time there, only in the summer we would go to Spitzberg, it's very near the Italian border. It used to belong to the Austrian branch of the Haukwit's but my uncle never went there. Now I think it belongs to some leftist actor -

ORLOV I didn't know you had blue blood -

RACHEL Why do you think I never married? .

ORLOV You may still get married -

RACHEL The only aristocrat in this world, Serghei Ilych, with whom I long to live -

(RACHEL day-dreams, then sighs and starts knitting again. PECHAR, still shaving himself, speaks to KUBIK without looking at him)

PECHAR You're definitely written off doctor, thanks to that fête -

PECHAROVA' (calls off stage) Vilém!

PECHAR Even the people who've stood by you till now, hold it against you -

PECHAROVA' (off stage) Vilém!

PECHAR I suppose you've realized that your posturing has got you nowhere. All you can muster now is this pathetic stubbornness. You're probably thinking you're some kind of a hero or a martyr. With a bit of luck you won't be showing off here much longer!

PECHAROVA' (off stage) Vilém!

PECHAR They'll soon get you, don't you worry!

(PECHAROVA' enters from the right with a thermometer)

PECHAROVA' (to PECHAR) Here you are. Why don't you answer when I call you?

PECHAR What's happened?

PECHAROVA' I have to take your temperature -

PECHAR There's no need -

PECHAROVA' You've been playing with your health long enough! If you are not going to be sensible it's got to be me -

(PECHAROVA' kneels down and puts thermometer under PECHAR's arm)

(in a low voice) Vilém -

PECHAR What is it?

PECHAROVA' She thinks you don't care about her -

PECHAR Do you think so?

PECHAROVA' I know it -

PECHAR What shall I do then?

PECHAROVA' Couldn't you, for example, try and be a little bit jealous?
She minds that you don't care about her affair with him -

 (PECHAROVA' pulls out the thermometer and examines it)

 There you are, ninetyeight! (shakes it down) I'll bring
you some aspirin -

PECHAR I don't want any -

PECHAROVA' You'll see how much better you'll feel afterwards!

 (PECHAROVA' hurries off to the Hotel with the thermometer)

TETZ (to ORLOV) I'm going to the lock this afternoon to see if
there are any mushrooms. Why not come along?

ORLOV I don't think so -

TETZ Do you have a plan for the afternoon?

ORLOV I'd like to read a little -

TETZ The old letters again?

ORLOV Hmm -

TETZ I might have known it! The past, is that the only thing
that exists for you? You pine, you sigh, reminisce, you
keep wasting your time while there are so many interesting
possibilities for spending it purposefully! Now, all one
has to do is to prepare a specific and concrete programme
for each day. All you've got to do then is to stick to it.
Anyway, I just don't understand it; if you can't get down
to serious work or do some excercises, you might at least
have fun from time to time! Do you ever have a glass of
wine? Enjoy a cigar? Sing a song? Do you ever get
involved in anything? Are you alive at all?

ORLOV I sang at the yesterday's party -

TETZ Yes, except that you burst into tears almost immediately!

 (MILENA comes out of the Hotel with a tray of fruit-juices.
First she offers one to KOTRBA)

MILENA Fruit-juice -

 (KOTRBA takes one glass with a nod of thanks. MILENA moves
to TETZ and ORLOV. TETZ takes two glasses off the tray and
offers one to ORLOV)

TETZ Vegetate, that's your motto! Motto of a dead man! If you
don't care about anything in your life, why hang on to it -

(MILENA has gone down the steps and offered a glass to RACHEL

RACHEL Thank you Milena -

(MILENA turns to DLASK but he only shakes his head. She then offers a glass to PECHAR without saying anything. PECHAR takes his glass)

PECHAR Thanks -

(MILENA is about to go)

Milena -

MILENA (stops) What is it?

PECHAR Are you angry with me?

MILENA I'm sick of all those scenes -

PECHAR You know me, I always burst out for silly things and then it eats me for a week -

(- pause -)

Look, I know you can't just ignore him, after all he's in love with you -

(- pause -)

One can see he's an unhappy man and you're quite right to refuse his suggestions with some consideration -

(- pause -)

Who the hell should understand all this better than me? Loving you just drives one crazy!

(- pause -)

And anyway, even if he meant it all seriously, I mean the hotel school and all that, who knows, perhaps it'd be a good idea to take him up on it. You'd make him happy and, at the same time, help yourself. And you and I could go on as before. Fool who makes an offer, idiot who turns it down!

DLASK (to KUBÍK) What are you doing on Sunday?

KUBÍK Why?

DLASK You and I are going to do this little do -

KUBÍK A do? How come?

DLASK My brother's mate has a pub some thirty miles from here and they're having this celebration on Sunday -

MILENA I can see I was pretty stupid -

PECHAR Why?

MILENA Because I took all those jealous scenes of yours for real. I can see it was all put on -

PECHAR

That's not true -

MILENA

You're all the same!

(MILENA runs off to the Hotel with her tray. PECHAR is slightly embarrassed, shakes his head and looks around the others with a half-witted smile. Nobody pays attention except for KOTRBA who also shakes his head and smiles idiotically. LIZA comes out of the Hotel with flowers in her arms. As soon as ORLOV sees her he goes to her)

ORLOV

(to LIZA) What about the tender, delicate and innocent words I would whisper in your ear in front of La Maison de la Haute-couture where you worked; a place of ostentation that contrasted so sharply with the proletarian milieu shared with your mother and brothers - were those words never uttered? Weren't we ever young?

LIZA

I couldn't tell what you did in your youth Count. All I know is that I wasn't there. Would you excuse me?

(LIZA veers away, goes down the steps to the garden and walks left. ORLOV outruns her and blocks her way)

ORLOV

If you weren't there then it never existed! Do you realize what you're taking away from me? One single word and I'll know that I lived, that I live, that it's me! Oh Liza, my identity is in your hands! Save me!

LIZA

I'm sorry Count, I can't rescue your identity by denying mine. And I must ask you never to speak about these things again -

(LIZA bypasses ORLOV and exits left. ORLOV hastens after her in despair)

ORLOV

(off stage) Liza! Liza!

(- a short pause -)

KUBIK

(to DLASK) Sorry, but this friend of your brother you just mentioned

DLASK

What about him?

KUBIK

Did he invite you to come to the celebration?

DLASK

Come on! He's my brother's mate, isn't he!

(LIZA enters hurriedly from the right carrying the flowers and turns towards the Hotel pursued by ORLOV)

ORLOV

Liza!

(They enter the Hotel.
- a short pause -)

KUBIK

(to DLASK) Yes, that's all right for you but I -

DLASK What about you? You just come with me!

KUBIK I don't think I should -

DLASK Why not? Do you know what an event this sort of thing is in a small village? Do you know how many new people will be there? Are you saying that the two of us should miss that? You must be mad -

 (LIZA enters hurriedly from the left carrying the flowers and walks to the right pursued by ORLOV)

ORLOV Liza!

 (They exit right.
- a short pause -)

KUBIK (to DLASK) I'd like to come but you must see that -

DLASK Even my brother will be there!

KUBIK I know -

DLASK Don't you want to meet my brother? You can't be serious. I've looked up the trains already -

 (LIZA enters hurriedly from the left with her flowers and turns towards the Hotel pursued by ORLOV)

ORLOV Liza!

 (They enter the Hotel.
- a short pause -)

KUBIK (to DLASK) You mustn't be angry with me. I just think, considering my situation -

DLASK As far as your situation goes I gave you my opinion already, didn't I?

KUBIK The thing is, it doesn't concern only you. I know that it doesn't worry you, but there's also your brother and his friend with the pub and a number of other people. We can't ask them to face up to it just like that. Don't you understand?

 (ORLOV comes from the right, crosses the stage slowly and goes up the steps onto the terrace where he sits down heavily beside TETZ)

DLASK (in a low voice) You shouldn't have said that -

KUBIK Why?

DLASK You've insulted my brother!

(PECHAR is shaving himself again.

- a short pause -

There is the sound of a train whistle in the distance -
all present glance at their watches simultaneously.
Shortly afterwards DRAŠAR followed by KRAUS come out of the
Hotel and stop on the terrace. All present stand up
immediately)

PECHAR Good afternoon sir -

TETZ Hello Joe -

(DRAŠAR ignores TETZ's familiarity. He waves his arm lightly
indicating that all present may sit down. When they are
seated he starts going through his pockets looking for
something. Eventually he produces a crumpled piece of paper.
He looks at it and addresses all present)

DRAŠAR We're glad that you are in the garden - (looks at his paper)
The Hotel regulations concern everybody - (looks at his paper)
We secured more tea for the mornings - (looks at his paper)
As you make your bed so you lie on it/- (looks at his paper)
We don't discriminate against anybody - (looks at his paper)
The light in the toilet is working again -(looks at his paper)
It depends on each and everyone of us -

(DRAŠAR wants to continue, looks at his paper from both sides
but there is nothing else. He puts it back into his pocket.
Uneasy applause. DRAŠAR puts his hand up indicating he wants
to continue ad lib. All fall into silence. DRAŠAR ponders
intensively for a while)

What will be will be -

(Display of appreciative approval.

- pause -

DRAŠAR thinks)

Achievement means striving -

(Display of appreciative approval.

- pause -

DRAŠAR thinks)

Life goes on -

(Display of appreciative approval.

- pause -

DRAŠAR thinks further, no more ideas. He starts going around
shaking hands with all present)

TETZ It was great Joe!

(DRAŠAR ignores TETZ's remark ostentatiously and doesn't
shake his hand. But, to the silent amazement of the others,
he stops in front of KUBÍK)

DRAŠAR So you are a writer?

KUBÍK

Yes -

(DRAŠAR nods his head gravely for a while)

DRAŠAR

Literature is important -

(DRAŠAR goes on pondering, then suddenly he smacks KUBÍK's backside cordially, turns towards RACHEL and gives her a nod to follow him. He waves to the rest and walks briskly to the Hotel followed by RACHEL. General relaxation. KRAUS looks into the Hotel to see if DRAŠAR is out of the way. Then he turns with a smile to KUBÍK)

KRAUS

Clown!

KUBIK

He is not so bad -

KRAUS

Not so bad! It makes me sick to think I was probably just like him when I was the director. I tell you, it's a terrible sight when you see things from below - Believe me Joe, I'd never go into it again -

TETZ

(to KRAUS) Joe -

KRAUS

(looks coldly at TETZ) Yes? What can I do for you?

TETZ

I just - did you know that -

(KRAUS only waves his hand and turns to all present)

KRAUS

I think it's a marvellous idea to have a party tomorrow. Above all it will allow us to get to know each other a little bit better and, who knows, even bring us closer together. Let's face it, it's a disgrace, we've been living under the same roof for such a long time, eating the same food, taking walks along the same paths, and, in spite of all that, we behave to one another like strangers! Isn't it about time to break down the barriers that stand between us? To throw away the masks of conventions? To open up to one another as human beings?

(KRAUS falls into deep thought, stares dreamily for a while, then smiles bashfully at KUBÍK and quickly walks away into the Hotel.

- a short pause -

Then ORLOV addresses PECHAR who is shaving himself again)

ORLOV

Can I ask you something?

PECHAR

Sure -

ORLOV

Aren't you sometimes afraid?

PECHAR

Me? Afraid of what?

ORLOV

Just generally -

PECHAR

Go on, what an idea!

(PECHAR stops shaving, puts the electric shaver aside, takes off his hat and starts combing his hair while singing his song softly)

PECHAR

Somewhere a hill
blossoms in green and gold,
and there are dreams
all that your heart can hold -

(The curtain closes)

F O U R T H A C T

(When the curtain opens KOTRBA sits on the terrace, this time at the table on the left. ORLOV and DLASK also sit on the terrace at the table on the right; there are two glasses and a bottle of wine. KUBIK is now at the table with the parasol where RACHEL used to sit. RACHEL sits on the bench, her handbag with its trail of wool lying beside her. PECHAR sits on the rug in the middle of the stage as in the preceding acts. He is absorbed in covering his body with sun-tan lotion while singing his song softly)

PECHAR Somewhere my love
 there will be songs to sing,
 although the snow
 covers the hopes of spring.
 Somewhere a hill -

(PECHAR's singing fades into a soft humming which diminishes under the ensuing dialogue)

RACHEL (to ORLOV) Are there many forests around Voronezh?

ORLOV I don't really know -

RACHEL But you did say you were born there -

ORLOV In Voronezh? No -
 (- pause -)

DLASK (to ORLOV) I'm not boring you?

ORLOV I like meeting new people -

DLASK We must be similar types -

(LIZA comes out of the Hotel carrying flowers. When she sees ORLOV she starts, looks embarrassed for a moment and then she speaks to him coyly)

LIZA Did you want to ask me something?

ORLOV Did I? No -

LIZA Forgive me then - I thought - I'm sorry -

(LIZA quickly leaves to the right. Shortly after a ball bounces onto the stage from the right followed by TETZ. He picks up the ball, looks around all present until he sees KUBIK)

TETZ Where have you been all afternoon?

KUBIK I had a little nap -

TETZ In the afternoon? Now, that's silly!

RACHEL (to ORLOV) But you were born in Russia?

ORLOV In Russia? Why in Russia?

RACHEL You are a Russian, aren't you?

ORLOV Hard to say -

(- pause -)

DLASK (to ORLOV) You haven't had an easy life, have you?

ORLOV It depends how you look at it -

DLASK Oh no, you haven't, just admit it! Well I haven't either!

ORLOV Still we've managed to bear it with dignity considering how lousy it is, don't you think?

DLASK I've always tried to -

(LIZA enters from the left carrying flowers. When she sees ORLOV she starts, looks embarrassed and then she speaks to him coyly)

LIZA Hadn't it something to do with Paris, your question, I mean?

ORLOV Paris?

LIZA Perhaps you were wondering whether we didn't - some years ago -

ORLOV It must be a mistake. As far as I remember I never was in Paris -

LIZA Forgive me then - I thought - I'm sorry -

(LIZA quickly goes into the Hotel.
- a short pause -)

TETZ (to KUBIK) Such a day, not a cloud in the sky, fresh air and you, sitting at home!

(PECHAR, examining himself in the pocket-mirror, speaks to TETZ without looking at him)

PECHAR If you think you've improved the situation in some way you're dead wrong. A moral blackmail, that's what it was!

TETZ Now that's perhaps -

(PECHAR puts aside his mirror, picks up the electric shaver and starts shaving himself)

KUBIK (to TETZ) And otherwise?

TETZ Otherwise?

KUBIK How do you feel mentally? I don't suppose it's too good either -

TETZ Not bad -

(- pause -
Then the sound of a train whistle in the distance - all present glance at their watches simultaneously)

RACHEL (to ORLOV) Excuse me but -

ORLOV Yes?

RACHEL Can I ask you where was it you were born?

ORLOV Who can tell -

RACHEL Surely you must be interested in your origins -

ORLOV Why should I?

RACHEL So it's not certain that you are a count!

(- pause -)

KUBIK (to TETZ) Why didn't you come to the fête on Sunday?

TETZ In my situation?

KUBIK Precisely in your situation you should have come! You've wasted an opportunity that's not likely to come up again soon -

(- pause -)

ORLOV (to DLASK) Feel homesick, don't you?

(DLASK nods his head slightly)

I don't go for memories myself. I prefer to look forward rather than backward, you know. In fact, I can't remember a thing -

DLASK You are a lucky man -

(- pause -)

KUBIK Can I tell you something Tetz?

TETZ Please -

KUBIK I have a funny feeling that you've simply resigned yourself -

TETZ Resigned?

KUBIK Yes, resigned, everything -

(- pause -)

ORLOV (to DLASK) One is bound to slip a little here and there, after all it's only human, but basically we've held our ground. In other words, we've nothing to be ashamed of -

DLASK We can look each other in the eye -

ORLOV And since we've got as far as this, into the final straight, as they say, why the devil shouldn't we make it to the end! Especially if we try together! How about it?

DLASK Hmm -

(- pause -)

KUBIK (to TETZ) I hope that you'll at least turn up at the director's birthday-party tomorrow.

(LIZA enters from the right carrying flowers. She addresses ORLOV excitedly)

LIZA What about the second-hand bookshop de Vrubecky? What about our reading Les Chants de Maldoror? What about your student garret in the Rue Jacob?

ORLOV I don't know what you're referring to -

LIZA (exclaims in despair) Serghei!

(DLASK jumps to his feet in excitement turning to LIZA)

DLASK Liza! It is you after all! Do you remember our young days in Paris?

LIZA I'm sorry Mr Dlask but I never was in Paris. Would you excuse me?

(LIZA bypasses DLASK and exits left. DLASK hastens after her)

DLASK (off stage) Liza! Liza!

(- pause -)

Then the sound of a train whistle in the distance - all present glance at their watches simultaneously. Shortly after that MILENA comes out of the Hotel carrying a tray of fruit-juices. She offers one to KOTRBA)

MILENA Fruit-juice -

(KOTRBA takes one glass with a nod of thanks. MILENA offers one to ORLOV, he only shakes his head. MILENA then goes down the steps to the garden and offers a glass to RACHEL)

RACHEL Thank you Milena -

(MILENA goes over to TETZ and KUBIK. KUBIK takes two glasses off the tray)

KUBIK (to TETZ) Here you are -

TETZ I'm not thirsty -

KUBÍK

You need vitamins -

(TETZ accepts the glass. MILENA then offers a glass to PECHAR who goes on shaving himself and ignores her ostentatiously.

- pause -)

MILENA

What's the matter with you?

PECHAR

Go away!

MILENA

Are you angry with me?

PECHAR

Did you hear what I said?

(- pause -)

MILENA

You told me yourself not to provoke him and show him some consideration -

(PECHAR puts aside hi electric shaver and looks up at MILENA)

PECHAR

Yes, but I didn't say you should play it both ways! You behave like a tart -

MILENA

Vilém -

PECHAR

Do you think I don't know what goes on in his head? I'll get you out of here, keep you at the hotel school, after that you'll squeeze every penny out of our boarding-house and all along you'll be having a great time together! I bet it would suit him, to have you kept by me while he's having a ball. And you'd go along with it!

MILENA

How can you say that?

PECHAR

Otherwise you wouldn't be listening to him -

MILENA

It all goes in one ear and out the other -

PECHAR

I'm being honest with you and I want the same from you! Think it over before it's too late. It's either him or me, is that clear?

MILENA

(sharply) All right then!

(MILENA goes energetically to the Hotel with her tray. PECHAR is slightly embarrassed, shakes his head and looks around with a half-witted smile. Nobody pays attention except for KOTRBA who also shakes his head and smiles idiotically. In the meantime DLASK returns gloomily from the Hotel and sits back at his place on the terrace. ORLOV takes a pack of cards out of his pocket and goes down the steps to the table where KUBÍK and TETZ are sitting. He snaps the cards and smiling at TETZ invites him to join in the game)

TETZ

Sorry, I don't play -

ORLOV

Shame -

(ORLOV, disappointed, shrugs his shoulders, puts the cards back into his pocket and sits down beside TETZ. KUNC enters from the left. Nobody pays any attention to him except for KOTRBA who breaks out in an animated waving of hands and smiles at him. KUNC goes straight to him and whispers something at length in his ear. KOTRBA is amused and often bursts out laughing. When KUNC finishes his story they go on laughing for a bit, then they pat each others' backs amicably. KUNC hurries off to the left. KUBÍK picks up the ball from the table, dribbles it about and then turns to DLASK)

KUBÍK Shall we have a game?

DLASK Sorry, I don't play -

(KUBÍK goes onto the terrace, sits down beside DLASK and puts the ball on the table)

KUBÍK You're not doing yourself any good avoiding exercise!

ORLOV (to TETZ) I heard you weren't feeling too good -

TETZ When?

ORLOV Yesterday, at the director's birthday-party -

KUBÍK (to DLASK) So what did you do the whole morning?

DLASK I read a little -

KUBÍK Copies of your old letters, eh?

ORLOV (to TETZ) You could have at least shown up -

TETZ I thought perhaps it was better not to -

KUBÍK (to DLASK) The past, is that the only thing that exists for you? You pine, you sigh, reminisce, you keep wasting your time - do you ever get involved in anything?

ORLOV (to TETZ) What are you doing on Sunday?

TETZ Why?

ORLOV You and I are going to this little do -

KUBÍK (to TETZ) If you don't care about anything in your life, why hang on to it -

PECHAROVA' (off stage) Vilém!

(PECHAR who is shaving himself again speaks to TETZ, naturally without looking at him)

PECHAR You're definitely written off, thanks to that fête! With a bit of luck you won't be showing off here much longer!

PECHAROVA' (off stage) Vilém!

DLASK I think I'll be leaving soon -

RACHEL (looks up from her knitting) Don't you like it here with us?

DLASK I don't stay anywhere long, it's my nature -

PECHAROVA' (off stage) Vilém!

PECHAR (to TETZ) They'll soon get you, don't you worry!

(PECHAROVA' enters from the left. She carries a knitted vest. She goes straight to PECHAR, kneels down and helps him to put in on)

PECHAROVA' (in a low voice) Vilém -

PECHAR What is it?

PECHAROVA' If you fancy her why don't you have a go?

PECHAR She'll feel put out -

PECHAROVA' You must dress it up a bit. Tell her you'll take her away, get her a place at the hotel school, tell her you'll run your own boarding-house -

PECHAR But what about that boyfriend of hers?

PECHAROVA' Don't mind him! When you're tired of her he'll be a good excuse -

(When PECHAROVA' has finished helping PECHAR with his vest, she peers into his thermos-flask with which she hastens to the Hotel. PECHAR takes off his vest, folds it neatly and puts it aside. He starts rubbing in some more lotion.
- pause -
KUBÍK turns to ORLOV in the garden)

KUBÍK How was your walk?

ORLOV I didn't go for a walk. Did you write last night?

KUBÍK I couldn't sleep, I read a little. But I hope you got some sun -

ORLOV You know I can't stand the sun. Why didn't you write then if you couldn't sleep?

KUBÍK I don't know - didn't feel like it. Well, you can't be surprised you look the way you look!

ORLOV You know I can't stand the sun. Why didn't you write then if you couldn't sleep?

KUBÍK I couldn't sleep, I read a little. But I hope you got some sun -

ORLOV I didn't go for a walk. Did you write last night?

KUBÍK How was your walk?

(PECHAR rubbing himself with the sun-tan lotion starts singing his song in a low voice)

PECHAR

Somewhere a hill
blossoms in green and gold,
and there are dreams
all that your heart can hold -

(The sound of a train whistle in the distance - all present glance at their watches simultaneously.
Shortly after that KRAUS followed by DRAŠAR come out of the Hotel and stop on the terrace. All present stand up immediately)

PECHAR

Good afternoon sir -

KUBÍK

Hello Joe -

(KRAUS ignores KUBÍK's familiarity. He waves his arm lightly to indicate all present may sit down. When they are seated he starts going through his pockets looking for something. Eventually he produces a crumpled piece of paper. He looks at it and addresses all present)

KRAUS

We are glad that you are in the garden - (looks at his paper)
We don't discriminate against anybody - (looks at his paper)
The light in the toilet is working again - (looks at his paper)
It depends on each and everyone of us -

(KRAUS wants to continue, looks at his paper from both sides but there is nothing else. He puts it back into his pocket. Uneasy applause. KRAUS puts his hand up indicating he wants to continue ad lib. All fall into silence. KRAUS ponders intensively for a while - eventually he blurts out)

Life goes on -

(The curtain closes)

F I F T H A C T

(When the curtain opens, KUBÍK, reading a paper, sits on the terrace at the table on the left. KOTRBA sits at the table on the right. RACHEL sits at the table in the garden, knitting. ORLOV sits on the bench on the right. PECHAR sits on the rug in the middle of the stage. He is absorbed in covering his body with the sun-tan lotion while singing softly his song. After a short while the ball bounces onto the stage from the left followed by TETZ. He looks around all present until he sees ORLOV)

TETZ Where have you been all afternoon?

ORLOV I had a little nap -

(TETZ sits down beside ORLOV holding the ball in his lap. PECHAR speaks to KUBÍK without looking at him)

PECHAR Listen doctor -

TETZ You may think it's none of our business -

ORLOV But, in fact, it sort of concerns all of us -

RACHEL After all , it's the director's birthday, isn't it?

PECHAR Anyway, if it's all the same to you, if you go there or not -

TETZ What's the point of provoking him?

ORLOV You should see that for yourself without complicating the whole situation -

(DRAŠAR comes out of the Hotel, stops on the terrace and turns to TETZ with a smile)

DRAŠAR I tell you, it's a terrible sight when you see things from below -

(PECHAROVA enters from the left holding a glass of water and a tablet)

PECHAROVA' (to PECHAR) Here is your aspirin -

(PECHAROVA gives the aspirin to PECHAR, he swallows it and drinks some water. PECHAROVA goes to the Hotel)

DRAŠAR (to TETZ) Believe me Joe, I'd never go into it again -

KUBÍK (to DRAŠAR) Joe -

(DRAŠAR only waves his hand and goes to the Hotel. Shortly after that DLASK comes out of the Hotel carrying in one hand a bottle of wine and the other two glasses. He looks around and when he sees KUBÍK, he goes to his table)

DLASK Can I?

KUBIK (looks up surprised) Yes, of course, please -

(KUBIK offers DLASK the empty chair. DLASK sits down and pours wine into both glasses)

DLASK You don't mind me sitting here?

TETZ When I see someone I like and the moment is right for a little chat, I take the plunge without hanging about -

RACHEL This is it, it takes a little while before people team up -

ORLOV One is bound to slip a little here and there -

PECHAR But what counts is to see it sort of globally -

DLASK And from that angle we've basically held our ground -

TETZ We can look each other in the eye -

RACHEL And since we've got as far as this -

ORLOV Into the final straight, as they say -

KUBIK Why the devil shouldn't we make it to the end! How about it?

PECHAR They'll soon get you, don't you worry!

(LIZA enters from the right carrying flowers. As soon as ORLOV sees her he blocks her way)

ORLOV (in a low voice) I cannot believe that you've forgotten it all!

LIZA Would you excuse me?

(LIZA bypasses ORLOV and exits left. ORLOV hastens after her)

ORLOV (off stage) Liza! Liza!

(The sound of a train whistle in the distance - all present glance at their watches simultaneously. KRAUS comes out of the Hotel, stops on the terrace and turns to KUBIK with a smile)

KRAUS I tell you it's a terrible sight when you see things from below!

(PECHAROVA enters from the left carrying a glass of water and a tablet)

PECHAROVA (to PECHAR) Here is your aspirin -

(PECHAROVA' gives the aspirin to PECHAR, he swallows it and drinks some water. PECHAROVA' goes to the Hotel)

KRAUS (to KUBÍK) Believe me Joe, I'd never go into it again -
DLASK (to KRAUS) Joe -

(KRAUS only waves his hand and goes to the Hotel. Shortly after that ORLOV comes out of the Hotel carrying in one hand a bottle of wine and in the other two glasses. He looks around and when he sees TETZ he goes to him)

ORLOV Can I?

TETZ Yes, of course, please -

(ORLOV sits down beside TETZ. He pours wine into both glasses and offers one to TETZ. He stands the bottle by his feet)

ORLOV You don't mind me sitting here?

KUBÍK When I see someone I like and the moment is right for a little chat, I take the plunge without hanging about -

TETZ This is it, it takes a little while before people team up -

RACHEL One is bound to slip a little here and there -

PECHAR But what counts is to see it sort of globally -

ORLOV And since we've got as far as this -

KUBÍK Into the final straight, as they say -

DLASK Why the devil shouldn't we make it to the end! How about it

PECHAR They'll soon get you, don't you worry!

(LIZA comes out of the Hotel carrying flowers. As soon as TETZ sees her he blocks her way)

TETZ (in a low voice) I cannot believe that you've forgotten it all!

LIZA Would you excuse me?

(LIZA bypasses TETZ and exits left. TETZ hastens after her)

TETZ (off stage) Liza! Liza!

(The sound of a train whistle in the distance - all present glance at their watches simultaneously. DRAŠAR comes out of the Hotel, stops on the terrace and turns to DLASK with a smile)

DRAŠAR I tell you it's a terrible sight when you see things from below!

(MILENA enters from the left with a glass of water and a tablet)

MILENA (to PECHAR) Here is your aspirin -

(MILENA gives PECHAR the aspirin, he swallows it and drinks some water. MILENA goes to the Hotel)

DRAŠAR (to DLASK) Believe me Joe, I'd never go into it again -

ORLOV (to DRAŠAR) Joe -

(DRAŠAR only waves his hand and goes to the Hotel. Shortly after that TETZ comes out of the Hotel carrying in one hand a bottle of wine and in the other two glasses. He looks around and when he sees ORLOV he goes to him)

TETZ Can I?

ORLOV Yes, of course, please -

(TETZ sits down beside ORLOV, pours wine into both glasses and offers one to ORLOV. He stands the bottle by his feet)

TETZ You don't mind me sitting here?

DLASK When I see someone I like and the moment is right for a little chat, I take the plunge without hanging about -

KUBÍK This is it, it takes a little while before people team up -

PECHAR And since we've got as far as this -

TETZ Into the final straight, as they say -

ORLOV Why the devil shouldn't we make it to the end! How about it!

RACHEL They'll soon get you, don't you worry!

(LIZA enters from the right carrying flowers. As soon as PECHAR sees her he blocks her way)

PECHAR (in a low voice) I cannot believe that you've forgotten it all!

LIZA Would you excuse me?

(LIZA bypasses PECHAR and exits to the Hotel. PECHAR hastens after her)

PECHAR (off stage) Liza! Liza!

(PECHAROVA comes out of the Hotel carrying a tray with fruit-juices. She offers them around, then puts the tray on the table in the garden and sits down on PECHAR's rug. She takes off her dress and starts rubbing in the sun-tan lotion while humming PECHAR's tune. PECHAR comes out of the Hotel carrying a glass of water and a tablet)

PECHAR (to PECHAROVA) Here is your aspirin -

(PECHAR gives PECHAROVA the aspirin, she swallows it and drinks some water. PECHAR goes to the Hotel. LIZA appears from the left carrying a ball under her arm, she goes over to the right. KUBIK jumps to his feet and hastens after her)

KUBIK Liza!

(They both exit right)

RACHEL (to PECHAROVA) Don't forget, it's september already, it seems warm but you'll catch a chill from sitting on the ground -

(PECHAR comes out of the Hotel carrying a bottle of wine and two glasses. He looks around and when he sees RACHEL he goes to her)

PECHAR Can I?

RACHEL Yes, of course, please -

(PECHAR sits beside RACHEL and pours wine into both glasses LIZA comes in from the left carrying a ball under her arm, she goes towards the Hotel. DLASK immediately jumps up and follows her)

DLASK Liza!

(They both enter the Hotel)

RACHEL (to PECHAROVA) Don't forget it's september already, it seems warm but you'll catch a chill from sitting on the ground -

(KUBIK enters from the left carrying in one hand a bottle of wine and in the other two glasses)

KUBIK (to PECHAROVA) Here is your aspirin -

(KUBIK sits down on the rug and pours the wine into both glasses. MILENA enters from the right carrying a ball under her arm, she goes over to the left. ORLOV immediately jumps up to his feet and hastens after her)

ORLOV Milena!

(They both exit left)

RACHEL (to PECHAROVA) Don't forget it's september already, it seems warm but you'll catch a chill from sitting on the ground -

(LIZA enters from the left carrying in one hand a bottle of wine and two glasses in the other. She looks around and when she sees TETZ she goes to him)

LIZA Can I?

TETZ Yes, of course, please -

(LIZA sits down beside TETZ, she pours wine into both glasses and offers one to TETZ. She stands the bottle by her feet. DLASK enters from the right carrying flowers in his arms. He stops by the rug with PECHAROVA' and KUBÍK)

DLASK If you're not going to be sensible it's got to be me -

(DLASK goes onto the terrace and sits down at the table on the left. MILENA enters from the left carrying a glass of water and a tablet. She goes over to DLASK)

MILENA Where have you been all afternoon?

DLASK I had a little nap -

(MILENA gives DLASK the tablet. He swallows it and drinks some water. MILENA sits down at his table. The ball bounces onto the stage from the right followed by ORLOV. He picks up the ball, looks around until he sees PECHAR)

ORLOV Why don't you answer when I call you?

PECHAR Don't forget, it's september already -

(ORLOV joins PECHAR and RACHEL and puts the ball on the table. KUNC enters from the left. No one pays any attention to him except KOTRBA who breaks out in an animated waving of hands and smiles. KUNC goes straight to him and whispers at length in his ear. KOTRBA is amused and often bursts out laughing. When KUNC finishes with his story, they go on laughing for a bit, then they pat each others' backs amicably. KUNC sits down beside KOTRBA.

- pause -

The sound of a train whistle in the distance - all present glance at their watches simultaneously.

DRAŠAR comes out of the Hotel, stops on the terrace and turns to all present)

DRAŠAR Isn't it about time to break down the barriers that stand between us? To throw away the masks of conventions? To open up to one another as human beings? It may not seem so but time is flying, life is short and your stay here flows by like a river - Sooner than you realize some of us will be leaving and those who stay behind will be sorry, alas too late, how little they knew those, irrevocably gone, how little they showed them that after all, and in spite of everything, they felt towards them something more, something a little deeper -

(KRAUS comes out of the Hotel - all present stand up. DRAŠAR cuts short his speech and steps aside. KRAUS waves his arm lightly indicating that all present may sit down. When they are seated, he starts going through his pockets looking for something. Eventually he produces a crumpled piece of paper. He looks at it and addresses all present)

KRAUS The Hotel regulations concern everybody -

(KRAUS looks at his paper, turns it over and then puts it in his pocket. Uneasy applause.

- pause -

The sound of a train whistle in the distance - all present glance at their watches simultaneously. DLASK produces a pack of cards from his pocket, shuffles them skilfully and with a professional crackle invites KRAUS to join him in the game)

KRAUS Sorry, I don't play -

DLASK Shame -

(DLASK disappointed, puts the cards back into his pocket)

LIZA (to TETZ) Did you want to ask me something?

TETZ Did I? No -

(- a short pause -)

PECHAR I can always justify what I'm doing!

PECHAROVA' (to KUBÍK) We could get together more often, what do you say?

KUBÍK You haven't had an easy life, have you?

KRAUS What will be will be -

(- a short pause -)

ORLOV If only I had a bit of time I'd get on with my memoirs! Things are getting clearer every year -

RACHEL (to KUBÍK) So it's not certain that you are a count!

KUBÍK I don't really go for tactics, you know!

DRAŠAR Achievement means striving -

(- a short pause -)

TETZ (to MILENA) You behave like a tart!

KUBÍK To write, it's not laying bloody bricks, is it!

KRAUS Life goes on -

(- a short pause -)

PECHAROVA' Early childhood has a great influence on the formation of a character -

RACHEL One is bound to slip a little here and there -

TETZ (to all present) We could get together more often, what do you say?

DRAŠAR The light in the toilet is working again -

(During the ensuing dialogue all those who have been sitting start gradually getting up, wander around the stage, stop with one another forming different constellations, momentous groups which keep dispersing)

TETZ (to RACHEL) Well? Shall we go away together?

RACHEL And what about your wife?

TETZ I prefer to look forward rather than backward -

DLASK (to ORLOV) A moral blackmail, that's what it was!

LIZA (to KRAUS) Why the devil shouldn't we make it to the end! How about it?

KRAUS It depends on each and everyone of us -

MILENA (to DLASK) So you are a writer?

DLASK I had a little nap -

DRAŠAR (to PECHAROVA') Clown!

PECHAROVA' Literature is important -

ORLOV (to PECHAR) It was great Joe!

PECHAR They'll soon get you, don't you worry!

MILENA (to KUBÍK) You've insulted my brother!

KUBÍK We must be similar types!

RACHEL (to PECHAROVA') I can always justify what I'm doing!

PECHAROVA' (to all present) We could get together more often, what do you say?

DLASK (to TETZ) The light in the toilet is working again -

TETZ And otherwise?

DLASK I think I'll be leaving soon -

KRAUS (to DRAŠAR) Don't you like it here with us?

DRAŠAR What good has all this independence brought me if I never was truly happy?

ORLOV (to DRAŠAR) That's because you won't touch prunes -

LIZA (to PECHAR) Weren't we ever young?

PECHAR I had a little nap -

MILENA (to PECHAROVA') Aren't you sometimes afraid?

PECHAROVA' Me? Afraid of what?

RACHEL (to DLASK) Don't you want to meet my brother? You can't be serious!

DLASK I must ask you never to speak about these things again -

MILENA (to all present) You're all the same!

LIZA (to all present) We could get together more often, what do you say?

KUBÍK Life goes on -

(During the ensuing dialogue we can hear the recorded theme from the film Doctor Zhivago. As the music grows louder all the characters almost involuntarily begin to waltz while moving around the stage)

TETZ (to DRAŠAR) Do you know what an event this sort of thing is in a small village?

DRAŠAR We secured more tea for the mornings -

PECHAROVA' (to DLASK) The Hotel regulations concern everybody -

RACHEL (to TETZ) But you are a Russian -

TETZ I must ask you never to speak about these things again -

ORLOV (to TETZ) We must be similar types -

DLASK (to ORLOV) That's because you won't touch prunes -

ORLOV A moral blackmail, that's what it was!

MILENA They'll soon get you, don't you worry!

TETZ Life goes on -

LIZA (to KRAUS) Well? Shall we go away together?

PECHAR (to DRAŠAR) So it's not certain that you are a Count!

DRAŠAR Achievement means striving -

PECHAROVA' (to all present) You're all the same!

PECHAR (to all present) We could get together more often, what do you say?

KRAUS I don't go for memories myself. I prefer to look forward rather than backward -

DLASK Things are getting clearer every year -

TETZ We don't discriminate against anybody -

MILENA Weren't we ever young?

ORLOV Vegetate - that's your motto!

DRAŠAR We could get together more often, what do you say?

LIZA Life goes on -

TETZ Weren't we ever young?

PECHAR Things are getting clearer every year -

KRAUS You're all the same!

ORLOV We don't discriminate against anybody -

PECHAROVA' Literature is important -

MILENA Achievement means striving -

LIZA Literature is important -

TETZ We don't discriminate against anybody -

PECHAR You're all the same!

KRAUS Things are getting clearer every year -

ORLOV Weren't we ever young?

DRAŠAR Life goes on -

(The music grows louder until it drowns the dialogue. The movement of the characters gradually becomes a dance; first only one pair, then another, and so on, until all the characters are dancing including KOTRBA and KUNC. Men who can't find a female partner dance together. The pairs swap the partners along the way. The dance becomes wilder as the music grows louder until the stage represents one ecstatic waltzing whirl. When it reaches its peak, the music slowly loses its volume, the dance subsides and the pairs resume the original rhythmic movement. They gradually return to their initial positions. After that the music fades out completely and all the characters stare rigidly into the auditorium. A deadly silence. The characters look like wax figurines - can be helped by the light effect. The stage is getting darker. When this ghostly scene grows almost unbearably long, the curtain slowly closes. Once it's completely closed, we can hear the sound of a train whistle in the distance)